COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XIII. No. 11.] LONDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1808. [PRICE 10D.

"A prostitution of honours and rewards, particularly for military services, is one of the strongest marks "of national decline."——LORD MOIRA. *Speech on the Danish Expedition.*

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

LORD LAKE (continued from page 375.) It was observed before, but is not unworthy of being again observed, that in making the grant to the family of Lord Lake, both *parties* were perfectly of accord. They can wrangle upon other points; they can dispute, inch by inch, about papers relating to any matter, wherein they can trump up a charge against each other, amounting to an allegation that they are respectively *unfit for place*. This is all fair play; but, when it is a question of merely public interest; and especially when the money of the public is proposed to be granted to one, or any, of themselves, the two factions, like two lawyers at the end of a pleading, are all politeness and complaisance, all liberality and generosity: they seem to strive to their utmost to out-do each other in protesting against every thing that is *mean*.——Of Lord Lake the people of England know nothing. There are not, in all probability, two persons out of a thousand, in the country, who know that there ever was such a man in existence; and now that his name comes to be frequently mentioned, the first question you hear, is, "who and what was he?" It is impossible to make the people believe, that a person, of whom they have never heard before, should merit, out of the fruits of their labour, such large sums of money.——Mr. Paull has, in a public letter, stated that this lord, for several years, was in the receipt of not less than twenty thousand pounds annually. Nobody has contradicted this statement, and, I believe, nobody can, with truth, contradict it. He had, besides, a lucrative sinecure, and his pay as a colonel of a regiment. Yet, the demand upon the public purse is now made, under the allegation, that he died poor, and that his family stands in need of something from the public, wherewith to maintain a degree of splendour suitable to the title of nobility. Lord Folkestone objected to this plea of poverty, and well he might; for, if it be admitted, where shall we hope to find an end to the demands proceeding thereon? The plea of one poor man is as good as that of another poor man; and, if we confine the concession to those who have titles of nobility, the number, God knows, is by no means small. Admit the validity of this plea, and it follows, that, when once a title is bestowed, for services real or pretended, that the nation, whatever may be its circumstances, is bound to maintain the family for ever afterwards. No matter whence the poverty may have arisen. No matter from what extravagance, what follies, what vices: if, without any inquiry as to these points, the parliament is to grant money, upon the bare plea of poverty, as it has done in the present instance, it is no matter what the cause of the poverty may be; and, if we lived under a race of profligate princes (a case which history proves not to be impossible), some of them might first pillage and impoverish a subject, and then send him to parliament upon the plea of poverty, making use of their party connections for the purpose of thus disguisedly perpetrating their robberies of the people. A case of this sort, is not, indeed, to be apprehended at the present time; but, it is sufficient to show, that it may possibly exist, in order to prevent the establishing of the precedent in question.—But, seeing that poverty is the plea for a grant, out of our earnings, of nine thousand pounds in ready money, and two thousand pounds a year in perpetuity; seeing that the taxes of the nation are to be mortgaged to the amount of fifty or sixty thousand pounds (not one hundred thousand as stated by mistake in my last) upon this plea, we may, surely, be permitted to ask, *how* Lord Lake became poor? MR. PAULL's statement respecting the pecuniary affairs of this lord is as follows, and, before he peruses it, the reader is requested to bear in mind, that this statement has not been contradicted.

"Let the conduct of Lord Lake at Lin-
"celles, and on the continent, and in Carle-
"ton-house, have been ever so meritorious
"(for even Lord Castlereagh will hardly
"bring to our remembrance his services at
"Killala or in any other part of Ireland), I
"maintain that he was more than amply
"remunerated. He had his regiment, and
"he had the government of Plymouth. In
"1800, he was offered a red ribbon; but,

" in preference, he pressed for, and obtain-
" ed, principally through the influence of
" his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales,
" the situation the most lucrative that the
" crown could bestow on a military man—
" that of commander-in-chief, and senior
" member of the council of Bengal, with a
" fixed salary, exclusive of powerful patro-
" nage, and the means of providing for his
" family, of £16,000 per annum, paid
" monthly, in a country where the legal in-
" terest is twelve per cent.—a situation that
" no military man, for many years past,
" was allowed to remain in for more than
" three or four years at most; a period
" during which a splendid fortune may ho-
" nourably be acquired.——Lord Lake was
" appointed in 1800, and arrived in Bengal
" early in the following year, and I assert as
" a fact, what I can prove, and I dare the
" friends of Lord Lake to deny it, that pre-
" vious to August, 1803, the breaking out
" of the Mahratta war, Lord Lake had
" saved sufficient to pay into the hands of
" Mr. John Rudd (who received a monthly
" instalment, on account of those having
" claims, in England, on Lord Lake), the
" enormous sum of £38,000, which, I was
" well assured by those who had the ma-
" nagement of the fund, was the *whole*
" debts of the deceased general.——After
" the payments to Mr. Rudd of £38,000,
" General Lake took the field against the
" Mahrattas. At Allegheer, Delhi, and
" Agrah (exclusive of grain, cattle, and
" stores, to a great amount in value, and of
" every description), the sum, in *actual mo-*
" *ney*, was, eight lacs at Allegheer; ten at
" Delhi; and at Agrah, though stated at only
" 24 lacs in Lord Lake's dispatches, the
" actual sum was 34; but taking his own
" statement of money (exclusive of cattle,
" grain, and stores), 8 at Allegheer, ten at
" Delhi, and 24 at Agrah, those sums make
" 42 lacs of rupees, which, at £12,500 for
" the lac (the rate at which the money was
" borrowed by the Company) Lord Lake
" received, at these places, one-eighth of
" £525,000, or a sum exceeding £65,000;
" the elephants, camels, horses, grain, and
" valuables, with the whole of the camp
" equipage taken at Allegheer, Coil, Delhi,
" Agrah, Laswaree, Sassnee, Bidjigheer,
" Collhurah, &c. attendant on Hindostanee
" armies, amounting to 130,000 fighting
" men, exceeded the value of 50 lacs of
" rupees, or £624,000 sterling. But take
" their value only at equal amount to the
" specie, and Gen. Lake received a sum in
" prize money of at least £130,000 ster-
" ling. From Sept. 1803 to April 1807,
" Gen. Lake received, exclusive of the in-
" terest, accruing from this enormous sum,
" and exclusive of field-allowances, the sum
" of £56,000, paid monthly, or exchanged
" for company paper, making, with the
" sum paid Mr. Rudd, an aggregate of
" £224,000, exclusive of the immense
" amount of interest received in India; and
" yet, notwithstanding these well known
" facts Lord Castlereagh has the audacity
" to come to parliament for a grant, from
" the burdened people of Great Britain of
" £2,000 per ann. for the successor of the
" deceased general.—— But, gentlemen,
" this is not all, Lord Lake carried with
" him to India, his son George Augustus
" Lake, a captain in the army, as his aid-de-
" camp and military secretary, and who, as
" such, became postmaster in the field, and
" for a considerable time acting adjutant-
" general, or quarter-master-general, to the
" King's forces serving in India; which si-
" tuation gave him increased rank and pay.
" Exclusive of the emoluments arising from
" the latter appointment, captain, now
" Lieut.-Colonel Lake, from the hour of his
" arriving in India, received *(living in the*
" *family of his father)* a monthly allowance
" of £750, or £8,000 per ann., exclusive
" of interest, his allowance for six years
" exceeded £48,000, and in that period he
" received also a further sum, exceeding
" £15,000 for prize-money, making an
" aggregate of £63,000 sterling, exclusive
" of the interest, accumulated by monthly
" payments. Thus I have proved, that the
" late Lord Lake, and his young son, re-
" ceived a sum, in six years, greatly ex-
" ceeding £300,000; and yet, without
" consulting the fame of the deceased, or
" the distresses of the country, the King's
" ministers dare to propose the grant I have
" mentioned; and it is yet to be seen, if
" there is one member bold enough to resist
" it in the House of Commons."——Now,
as I have before observed, this statement of Mr. Paull (for the making of which he is entitled to the thanks of the public) has hitherto remained unanswered. There is, indeed, no reason to suppose that it is materially incorrect. The sources of Lord Lake's wealth are pointed out; the amount of it mentioned in detail; the statement is made public; and there is not any ground for supposing, that it has not proceeded from public motives. Three hundred thousand pounds, therefore, allowing it to be fifty thousand pounds more or less, is, according to the best evidence that we possess, the sum, which, within the last seven years, has come into the hands, and become the

property, of Lord Lake and of the heir to his title. How, then, has this money been spent? Whither is it gone? One of two facts is certain: either it has been squandered away, or it is still, for the greater part, possessed. Let those, who now come to the oppressed nation with the plea of poverty, choose as to which side of the dilemma they prefer.——Mr. Whitbread said, that he was disposed to resist the proposed grant; but, when he heard the plea of poverty advanced, he was obliged to give way. Give way! what, without any inquiry, to ascertain whether the plea was founded, or not? Upon other points; upon points where *party* interests are at stake, Mr. Whitbread can express his doubts as to the correctness of the assertions of the ministers. Nay, he can contradict, flatly contradict those assertions. But, when the question is whether the public money shall be given away, he has no doubts at all, it seems, and scorns to be so illiberal as to call for any inquiry, for any proof, whatever. He delights to dwell upon the miseries occasioned by *the war*; he backs the petitions of those who call for peace; he bids the ministers look to the "hundreds of thousands of starving manufacturers;" but, he appears to forget, that it is the taking of the fruits of the people's labour, and the bestowing of them upon those who do not labour; that this, and this alone is the real cause of national distress. War creates distress in the same way; but, it appears strange, that he, who so sorely laments over those who are distressed by the war, should have no feeling for the distress occasioned by pecuniary grants.——This grant to the family of Lord Lake is another of the expences which India has brought upon England. It has been proved, over and over again, that the possession of India is injurious to this country, and a benefit to the East India Company only. But, the thousands of evils attending that possession are hidden from the sight of most men; and, indeed, if one reflects for a moment on the means which have been used, by the powerful parties interested, to persuade the nation, that the possession of India is necessary to the well-being of England, it is not to be wondered at, that deception so complete should generally prevail. The poor-houses of England are, in the one fourth part, perhaps, filled by the influence of India. That is the accursed channel, through which much of the fruit of English industry passes into the possession of those who do nothing. Yet, for the keeping open of this accursed channel we are content to sweat and to pay, and your patriots of the new school, such as Mr. Roscoe, while they seem to grudge a guinea for the defence of England herself, are ready to grant millions for the "securing and extending of our "Empire in the East." The grant of a million of pounds to the East India Company (which already owes the nation six or seven millions) passes the House of Commons without a single word of comment, from any quarter of that Assembly; and, there appears to be little doubt, that the whole of the *debts* of that Company, the individuals of which are gaining great *riches*, will finally, and, perhaps, very shortly, be thrown upon the nation, which is already so taxed as to leave no man in possession of any thing, which, in the true sense of the word, he can call his *own*, even the proprietors of the soil being little else than the stewards of the ministry.——This is the situation, in which we are, when a demand is made upon us for money to support the *dignity* of a family, which, during the last seven years, have received out of the taxes raised upon us, three hundred thousand pounds. For, observe, it is a gross deception to represent this sum as having been derived from any other source. The plunder of the Mahrattas, for instance, consisted, I suppose, of gold and jewels, amongst other things; but, the army of India; the fleet of India; the wars for the preservation of India; the thousand of expences on account of India, are from English resources, and we shall find, that, in this circuitous way, all that is gained by Indian adventurers, comes from the sweat of our brows. Look into the account of the money annually voted by parliament; see what immense sums are voted on account of India, while, on the other side, not one penny is received from India, in any shape, or under any name. Out of these sums it is, that Lord Lake and his son have, according to the statement of Mr. Paull, in his excellent letter above quoted, received three hundred thousand pounds. What they have received in the way of salary, pay, or allowances, or under whatever other name the fingerers of our earnings have been able to invent, obviously comes from the taxes, because you will find, in the accounts before-mentioned, millions paid to the East India Company, for expences, real or pretended, of wars for their own protection, while it is notorious, that they are millions in debt to the nation; and while it is equally notorious, that they have a debt, which the nation is finally to take upon itself, which debt has, of course, partly arisen from the sums of money paid to Lord Lake and his son. Where is the

difference to us, whether we pay three hundred thousand pounds directly to Lord Lake and his son, or whether that sum be paid to them by a company, who receive the money from us, without having given us any value for it? This, therefore, is the true light, in which to view the transaction: we have, during the last seven years, paid three hundred thousand pounds to Lord Lake and his successor, and now that Lord Lake is dead, that successor comes to us for the means of supporting his *dignity*, he being too poor to support it out of his own purse.——I object to the *monument* also, not merely as a thing of expence, but as not being merited. I know of no deeds of great valour performed by Lord Lake, or by any commander that has ever been in India. Even Lord Cornwallis was a hero there. It is an inferior species of warfare which is there carried on. It is against a people not to be counted against Europeans. I should as soon think of a monument for a man, who, with a pack of mastiffs, had vanquished a numerous herd of cattle. We despise the idea of "the *conquerors* of Peru and Mexico," yet, it would be impossible to point out any essential difference in the two cases. The heroes, indeed, who return from India, will tell you that they have had bloody fellows to encounter; but, you have always this one fact wherewith to answer them: that there are thirty or forty millions of those bloody fellows, kept in subjection, nay in abject slavery, by a *thousandth* part of their number of Europeans. There is no valour to be displayed in the defeating of such people; and, therefore, none of the rewards of valour ought to attend it. The parliament may, as far as they can go, put the name of Lord Lake upon a level with that of Lord Nelson; but they cannot, thank God, give it any other than its proper place in the minds of the people. "Brave man!" "oh gallant man!" They may repeat this as long as they please. They may even pass a *vote* to that amount; but the people will still have their own opinions; or rather, they will have no opinion at all about what they have never heard of; and they will remain heart-whole though fifty Lord Lakes should expire in a year. Sir Francis Burdett appears, from the report of his speech, to have made something sounding like an apology for denying Lord Lake to have discovered any proofs of great military prowess; but, surely, there required no apology for speaking the truth, which ought to be spoken, and freely too, of the dead as well as of the living; for, as to the maxim, that no harm is to be said of the dead, if it means any thing more than that particular care should be taken not to exaggerate, and not to speak evil of them unnecessarily, it is perfectly absurd; because the observance of it must, of course, render biography and history, not only useless, but as far as it produced any effect at all, mischievous. What, I would ask the reader, must be the character of that maxim, the observance of which would transform the Newgate Calendar into a series of panegyrics? The gibbeted robber is *dead* as well as the peculator or corruptor or borough-monger whom he murdered; and, if the circumstance of death is to seal up our lips with regard to the latter, where is the justice of hanging up the former that his name may be held in execration as long as the last of his bones shall remain unreduced to its native dust, nay as long as the fragment of the most durable of wood and of metal, shall retain the signs of having been dedicated to the commemoration of guilt? Where is the justice of this? Let those who are advocates for the maxim answer me the question. Indeed, there seems to be no reason for this maxim, other than that it has been found in some Latin author, who, in all probability, was actuated by a selfish motive, and whose doctrine, therefore, will, it is to be feared, never want an abundance of advocates. If ever there be an occasion, where the merits of a person deceased ought to be freely discussed, it surely is when a claim is preferred, founded upon those merits. A similar discussion in history is useful, and, therefore, proper; but, in a case like the present it is absolutely necessary to the ends of justice; and, if the persons, who are to decide upon the claim, act in trust for others, and yet shun the discussion, they are guilty of a breach of that trust.—But, I may be asked, why these observations, now that the monument project has been given up? The observations apply to the grant of money as well as to the monument; but, the proposition was *made*, and it was from very shame only that it was abandoned. *How* was it abandoned too? What were the *reasons* given? These reasons are worthy of being recorded. Lord Castlereagh, who had on the 29th of Feb. given notice, that he should move for the monument, came to the House of Commons, on the 2d of March, and said, that, "in calling the attention of the house to "the notice respecting a monument to be "erected to the memory of lord Lake, "which had been suspended by a notice, "having a prior claim to the attention of the "house, on a former night, did not mean

to recur to that notice, or again to offer to the house the motion which was the subject of it. Having communicated with many persons devoted to the memory of lord Lake, and participating in the high veneration in which he held the services of that gallant man, he found that it was the general wish of those persons to give way to *the difficulties of parliamentary form that had arisen.* The family of the noble lord, deeply penetrated with a sense of gratitude for the vote passed the other night, was willing *to rest its claims on the public bounty there,* rather than press a point upon which *many of those* who had voted in approbation of lord Lake's general merit and services, may be found in opposition. In this feeling he thought it his duty to concede; but he could not help lamenting that parliament appeared to have laid it down as a principle, that the glorious testimony of a public monument was to be confined to the services of those who died in battle. Lord Howe's monument was the only exception to this rule, for that of lord Cornwallis's stood on very distinct grounds. He admitted that the limitation to those who died in battle was a good and convenient general principle. But at the same time, when monuments were held to be the most appropriate marks of public gratitude, as being at the same time most honorable to the deceased, and best calculated to excite emulation in the minds of posterity, it seemed to be a strange exclusion that prevented a lord Lake, a lord Rodney, and a lord Duncan, from being found among the illustrious heroes thus consecrated to fame, while many persons of much inferior rank and merit were so honoured. The distinction would never be asked but for striking examples of merit and service, and the reward may safely be granted without the fear of deviating into abuse. It would certainly be no injury to those who fell in battle, to admit to a participation of this honour, those who had equally entitled themselves by victory, and who had no other bar to their claim but that of a greater interval of time between their service and their death. It was not the death but the service that was the proper object of reward."——I will not pester the reader with any remarks upon these *opinions* of his lordship, which are of no more importance than the conversation which passed at mother Catalani's, when he and his wife, the other day, were honoured by an admission to a select party of that celebrated squaller. His facts are all that I shall meddle with; and I shall be glad to know what he meant by "the difficulties of parliamentary *form* that had arisen" to prevent his motion for the monument. His lordship is famous for talking much and saying little, and this is an instance of his talent in that way. I know of no "parliamentary form" that there was to prevent the making of the motion, of which notice had been given. No: what he might have said, was, that the opposition which the grant had met with, made him fear, that the monument might meet with a much stronger opposition. Perhaps thirty or forty persons might have spoken against it. This, however, he would not have regarded; but, it was the *division* that he was afraid of, and he was quite sure, that the house would be divided, seeing that "illiberal" man, Sir Francis Burdett, would, in probability, be present. To have carried the question by mere dint of office and of influence would have been a little too barefaced, and he saw that it was to be carried in no other way. The reasons which he gave for withdrawing his notice were truly worthy of him and of the claimants. "The family of the noble "lord was willing to rest its claims upon the "vote already passed." That is to say, they were not sublimated by their nobility out of their sober senses; and that like good, prudent, philosophical people, they preferred "the solid pudding to the empty praise;" or, at any rate, being provided for themselves, they were content to waive their claims to that which was to have done honour to the memory of him, upon the alledged merits of whom, they had claimed and obtained that provision——I cannot dismiss this subject, without going back a little to notice the reported speech of MR. BANKES, on the 29th of February. "He thought "the question might be judiciously divided; "he could not resist the grant of the "pension to lord Lake, and differed on this "*as he did on many other topics, from an* "*hon. baronet.* He thought, that to liberally reward brilliant services was, in "all cases, the best economy. He objected, however, to the retrospective date "commencing at 1803. He disapproved "also of extending the grant beyond the "present lord Lake's successor. *He sen-* "*sured the principle of annexing, of course,* "*pensions to peerages for the mere purpose* "*of sustaining the rank of the party.* In "a late review of the pension list which fell "to his lot, with others, *in the discharge of* "*a certain duty, he was sorry to find so* "*many names of high rank on that list.* "He thought that the honour of a monu-

" ment should be confined to those who " had fallen in victory, or died in conse- " quence of wounds received in the action " that led to victory." — As to Mr Bankes's *differing* from Sir Francis Burdett, upon many other topics as well as that of this grant of the public money, it was hardly necessary to declare it; for, I will venture to say, that there are not ten men in the whole nation, who ever did, or ever will, couple their names together. If, however, we may judge from the answer of the baronet, the declaration is not likely to have any very serious effect upon either his health or his spirits; for, he is reported to have said (and he is not apt to disguise his sentiments), that he was confident, that he should be able to console himself for the want of a participation in principle with the honourable gentleman. ——Mr. Bankes might as well have said nothing about the pension list, until it had been forth coming; for it is now nearly a year since the making of it out was ordered upon the amended, or rather, the changed, motion of Lord Cochrane. In that list, his lordship wished to have stated only the names of *members of the House of Commons and their relations*, only the names of " the guardians of the public purse," who touched out of that purse. This was overruled, and all the pensioners were to be put into one list. This list, however, hangs back. When it comes, any one will be competent to move for a division of it; for, the thing to be desired is, a list of all the members of the House of Commons, who receive, by themselves or their relations, any sums of money out of the taxes, that is to say, out of the sums which they annually vote away. This is the list which the nation wants to be furnished with; and we shall have it, sooner or later.——I perfectly agree with Mr. Bankes in censuring the practice " of annexing, as a matter of course, " pensions to peerages for the mere purpose " of sustaining the rank of the party;" but, I should censure equally, the peering of men, merely because they have, no matter how, got possession of immense sums of money, and are, thereby, enabled to bring several votes into parliament. I know that I have the misfortune to differ, in this respect, from the Edinburgh reviewers, who think this the only mode of obtaining " a true " representation of the people;" but neither that circumstance nor the silence of Mr. Bankes upon the subject, does at all tend to convince me, that a man ought to be made a lord merely because he has amassed a large sum of money.—— Amongst the " names " of high rank" which Mr. Bankes has found upon the pension list, I wonder whether his eye rested, for a moment, upon the name of *Lady Louisa Paget*, a daughter of the Earl of Uxbridge, who has a fortune of, perhaps, sixty thousand pounds a year. This pension could not have been granted upon the plea of *poverty*, and yet, I have never heard of any very brilliant services that Lady Louisa has rendered the country; nor is it, indeed, easy to conceive, how she can, in any possible way, have been of service to that public, from whose earnings Mr. Addington thought it proper to allow her a pension. This is very " indelicate," it will be said. A man must be a very brute to ask for the *reasons* why his money is taken by the tax-gatherer and given to a Lady Louisa; but when a poor woman comes to ask relief from the parish, it is not at all " indelicate" to enquire, and most rigidly, too, into the grounds of her claim; and, there is, besides, a law to compel fathers, who are able, to maintain such of their children (of whatever age they may be), as are incapable of maintaining themselves; a hint, from which, I think, Mr. Bankes and his colleagues of the finance committee may, if they are so disposed, derive considerable profit.

Mr. Steele.—— This gentleman, whose name made a great figure in the wranglings of last year, is now never mentioned. The public will bear the circumstances in mind. Mr. Steele was one of the army paymasters; he was succeeded by Lord Temple; Lord Temple found that Mr. Steele had taken out a large sum of the public money without any proper authority; these facts were laid before a committee, called the finance committee; a report from this committee was upon the point of being made, when the short parliament was dissolved; and, as the public will hardly need to be reminded, the whig papers asserted, that, in order to avoid the publishing of this report, the ministers resolved upon a sudden dissolution. Yet, mark the sequel, one whole session, and half another session, have now passed, and not one word have those whigs said about Mr. Steele and his money! No: that would not suit their purposes *now*. They have other game; and, having taken time to cool, they have considered, perhaps, that it would not be " liberal" to press hard upon poor " Tommy Steele." As to public justice, that is quite another matter. And yet, with facts like this before his eyes; with many such facts, there is a correspondent, in the present sheet, who complains of my hostility to the Whigs. I will answer him at length in another Number; but, I will now observe, that I have

not been able to discover, in any part of their conduct, one proof of their desire to promote the interests or honour of the country, and that, as far as relates to the management of the public money, I think them even worse than their successors. The very first thing that they should have set about was an inquiry into this affair of Steele. It was an affair of the utmost importance; and it was peculiarly their duty, as guardians of the people's money. This is the sort of matters relating to which they should move for *papers*. The power of the House of Commons is simply the power of the *purse*; but, for reasons which are now obvious to all the world, this is the only power, which the regularly trained opposition seem never to wish to exercise.

ARMY.——Lord Castlereagh has, I perceive, given notice of his intention to introduce into the Mutiny bill of this year a clause to give recruits the *choice* of enlisting for *life*, or for term of years. This is, in fact, to repeal the law for term of years; because there is no doubt, but by subsequent bill, or *regulation*, the ministers will take care that there shall be no enlistment for term of years.——If there ever was a measure, in their approbation of which all men of sober judgment might be said to be unanimous, it was that of changing the military service to term of years. There was only one little knot of men, under the immediate guidance of stupidity, substantial, tangible stupidity, accompanied with obstinacy proverbial, that opposed this measure, and that, too, from motives too bad and base to admit of description. Yet, is this measure now to be rendered nugatory by a side-wind clause of an act of parliament, made for the professed purpose of punishing mutiny and desertion, two crimes chiefly to be ascribed to the want of this very measure. The reasons for changing the engagement of soldiers from that of for life to that of term of years have been so often stated, and remain so completely unanswered, that it would be a waste of time to repeat the statement of them here; but, it may not be unnecessary to point out some of the consequences, which will result from the passing of the clause now proposed. The first will be a falling off in the numbers recruited for the regular army, unless a higher bounty be given; for, it never can be in the contemplation of any man in his senses to create a *fair competition* between the two conditions of service, it being evident that none but an ideot will enlist for life at the same bounty which is held out to him to induce him to enlist for five or seven years. Yes; it is self-evident that none but a real ideot, a creature that is incapable of distinguishing an ounce of bread from a whole loaf, will ever be persuaded to work twelve hours for a shilling, when he can have, from the same master, and for the very same sort of work, a shilling for working only three or four hours. The clause, therefore, must be intended to produce no effect at all, unless it be attended with some regulation giving superior inducements to the service for life. The chief of these inducements must be of a pecuniary nature; that is to say, a higher bounty must be given, and then we come back again to all the evils of high bounty, which have been so long a subject of general lamentation. We shall again have men deserting in a post chaise and four; and, after all, so many men will not be raised at once for the regular army; more frequent drafts must be made from the militia, and more frequent applications to the oppressed and affrighted parishes.——Another consequence will be this: there will be a distinction made between the treatment of the men, who have enlisted for term of years, and those who have enlisted for life, unless the former *choose* to change the condition of their servitude. I leave any man, who knows any thing of the army, to judge of the state into which this will throw a regiment. I leave him to judge of the many acts of oppression that will herefrom arise. No term-of-years men must be left; for then their example would be fatal; mutiny and desertion would inevitably be the consequence. They must be frowned upon; the door of promotion must be shut against them with the hand kept upon the latch to signify, that it may be opened upon their compliance. Thus will each regiment be deprived of the best services of the best of its men, who, feeling, as they must, the injustice exercised towards them, will have nothing left them but to hang or blind or maim themselves, or to desert. I do really think, that if party malignity should so far prevail as to effect the adoption of the clause above-mentioned, it will be very likely to give rise to a general mutiny.—— This sudden change in the military system, in that part of it which is certainly the most important, must excite contempt for the government in the minds of the soldiers. It is a matter that concerns them all so closely, that they *must* think about it, and they will talk about it. What must they, then, think and say of this capriciousness in law-giving? Lord Castlereagh is deceived, if he supposes, that they have their eyes shut. They have the use of their eyes and their

tongues into the bargain; and, there is this circumstance attending their remarks and opinions, that they are all of a mind. What must that mind be with respect to laws and regulations, which are changed with every change in the ministry? To what sort of motives must they attribute such changes? In this case the change is so obviously against them; it has in it something so ungracious; it has such striking marks of a return to oppression, that it must be, by them, so considered. It will be in vain to disguise the real nature of the measure by calling it a *permission to choose*. There is not a private soldier in the army fool enough not to perceive, that the government thinks that the measure last adopted left the soldier too much at liberty; loosened its hold upon him; that it now repents of what it has done in his favour; and that it wishes to re-grasp him for life. It is quite impossible to persuade him that this is intended for his good, or, that it has not proceeded from a spirit of harshness towards him; from a disregard of his feelings joined to an opinion, that he was made merely to be food for powder.——It is a well-known fact, that, at a late Quarter Sessions of the peace, an offender having had his choice, to go into the army or to Botany Bay, preferred the latter for a limited period to the former for life; expressing, at the same time, his readiness to enlist "under Mr. Windham's Plan." Nor is this at all surprizing. Hope is not only one of the chief ingredients in the happiness of man, but man may be said to live upon hope. Hope for something or other he will. Some will have no thoughts of leaving the army, but will live upon the hope of promotion. The number of these must, however, be comparatively small. The chief hope of the far greater part must always be the *termination of the servitude*. Let this hope be built upon a positive engagement, and the soldier contents himself therewith; because the foundation is sure, and clear before his eyes; but, if he has no such engagement to rest upon, he seeks for some other foundation, and desertion is the first that presents itself; for he must have hope, or he cuts his throat. Not only is it, in the case contemplated, to *refuse* him a lawful hope wherewith to cherish his patience, but actually to *take such hope away from him*; and, as to the guineas for which he may be induced to sell it, they will be forgotten when he is roused from the sleep, into which he has been thrown by the expending of those guineas. Here, too, the effect will be precisely that which any one but an obstinate human brute, bent upon the indulgence of his tyrannical disposition, would wish to prevent. The best of the men will be the last to be tempted to sell their liberty for the means of a debauch, and yet, in the way of these men it will be absolutely necessary to throw every sort of discouragement. It is useless to tell me about the honour and justice and humanity of the officers. The officers, generally speaking, will act agreeably to the will of those who are able, with a breath, to sink or to raise them; and, if that will be, that there should be no men remain upon term-of-years service, I would not for a trifle be, even for one week of my life, in the skin of a man.——There is no just ground for the change proposed; there is no good reason that can be given for it; and I trust it will not be persevered in; for, if it be, I am fully persuaded that the very existence of the army will be endangered. And, is this to be done from a mere motive of petulance? Merely to provoke an opponent; or to prevent it being said hereafter, that the great and salutary change, which has been lately adopted, with the general approbation of the couutry, is to be ascribed to the wisdom of that opponent? There is something so shocking in the idea that one turns from it with horror.——After all, however, if it be resolved, that nothing, however good, built up by a political opponent, shall remain undemolished, the fair way would be to bring in a bill of *repeal*. To endeavour to sap the foundation by a side wind clause; to enact a provision that shall surely work its fall; and then to cry out, that the thing was not calculated to stand, would be a most unmanly mode of proceeding, and discover a mind made up of meanness itself.——Once more I must observe, by way of conclusion, that it is paltry in the extreme, that it is despicable hypocricy, to pretend to give the soldiers, already enlisted, their *choice* of volunteering for life, or remaining upon their present footing. There will be, and there can be, no choice in the case, unless the soldier were arrived at very nearly the end of his term. The soldier may indeed choose; for he may enlist for life, desert, or cut his throat; but, as to living, a term-of-years man, in a regiment, almost the whole of whose men are enlisted for life, with a strong desire in all the officers to induce him to enlist for life as well as the rest, the thing would be impossible. Again, therefore, I must express my earnest wish that the ministers may abandon a scheme so evidently full of danger and of cruelty.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL BILL.——"A general meeting," says the Morning Chronicle of the 8th instant, "of the Merchants

" and others concerned in the American " trade is to take place on Thursday next, " for the purpose of taking measures with " regard to the Orders in Council. Several " resolutions are, we understand, to be " proposed by *Mr. Mullett* and *Mr. Mann*, " and it is said that *Mr. A. Baring*, the " author of the celebrated pamphlet upon " this subject, will bring forward Petitions " to both Houses of Parliment. A very nu- " merous and respectable assembly is ex- " pected, as the requisition is signed by " several of the most eminent merchants in " the city."——*Taking measures!* What do they mean by taking measures? And what right have these men to meet, in greater numbers than *fifties*, any more than other people? Mr. Baring has, possibly, half a million of money in his pocket, a circumstance which has not tended to lessen the number of puffs, which Mr. Perry has inserted in his pamphlet; but, a circumstance by no means sufficient, thank God, to authorize Mr. Baring to dictate to the ministers and to the parliament. Sir John Newport is alarmed lest Ireland should suffer for want of the *primum* of its linen manufactory, which it now gets from America. Instead of *primum of linen manufactory*, why could not the honourable Baronet have said *linseed*. It is shorter, more correct, much more easy to be understood, and is preferable for every purpose, except, perhaps, that of convincing his readers, that the honourable Baronet was once at school.——As to the ground of alarm, however, it is purely imaginary. If, indeed, Indian corn, or water-melons, had been the " the primum " of the linen manufactory," the case would have been desperate; but, " the primum " of the linen manufactory," that is to say (throwing aside this verbose manner of expression), *linseed*, will grow in Ireland, full as well as it will in America; and, as there is a scarcity of land only, in the former country, or rather of cultivation, I see no harm, but a great deal of good, likely to arise from converting part of the linen weavers into husbandmen.——Mr. Perceval's answer was, that such observations would tend " to show the Americans how they might " continue to distress us." This was a crying answer. It discovered a want of resource. As if it was not the business of the opposition to make distress, if possible, in order that the country might be tired of the ministers and drive them out of their places; and, as if Mr. Perceval and his set had not done the same thing when they were out of office. No, no: crying will never do. The way to have answered Sir John was to have reminded him that the Americans could not prevent the sun from shining and the rain from falling upon the land in Ireland; and, that the longer the Irish would be without American linseed, the longer the Americans would be without shirts.——When we come to talk of *distresses*, we have decidedly the advantage; and of this all the world will be convinced, if the bill now passing remain in force for a year.

Botley, 10 *March*, 1808.

DEFENCE OF THE WHIGS.

Sir,——In common with others of your readers, I have remarked, with some surprise, the extreme hostility which you seem to cherish against the late administration. So strong is your propensity to blame them, that you not only seize with avidity every circumstance that falls in your way, which can by any possibility be made a ground of accusation, but not unfrequently " travel out of the record" in quest of materials for censure. What can be your reasons for antipathy so violent, for invectives so acrimonious? Those who, with me, are of opinion, that the late ministers deserved well of their country, and who beheld their dismissal from office with the deepest regret, regarding it as really a public calamity, cannot greatly admire the wanton and illiberal reflections on their conduct, which so frequently occur in the Political Register. If it be inquired what the late ministers did to merit approbation, I also would ask in return, who is there so unreasonable as to expect every political virtue to be brought into full exercise, every needful plan of reform completed, every long established and inveterate abuse extirpated, by any set of ministers, within the compass of twelve short months. For my part, I am inclined to give them credit for having accomplished as much as time and circumstances would well admit of: nor ought it to be forgotten that it was the urging of a most salutary measure of reform, equally just and expedient, which occasioned their dismissal. Admitting, however, that both the *Ins* and the *Outs* are alike worthless, and deserving of the reprobation you bestow upon them, admitting that the demerits of the two factions, as you call them, if weighed against each other, would be almost equally balanced; it appears to me that the manner in which the present ministers contrived to sneak into power, and to circumvent their more manly and honourable rivals, is a circumstance in itself alone abundantly sufficient to turn the scale against those who could stoop to such artifices. Allowing, then, that the late ministers

deserve reprehension for their delinquencies, it seems hardly fair that the measure of chastisement dealt out to them, should so much exceed what falls to the share of their opponents.—Indeed, at the period of the late change of administration, I could not but wonder that the secret machinations, the back-stair cabals, "the mystery of iniquity" by which that change was effected, did not draw down a few more strokes of your scorpion scourges. Before that time, notwithstanding the occasional severity of your animadversions, you appeared, on the whole, inclined to think rather favourably of the late administration. At the close of your strictures on their behaviour in regard to the Hampshire petition, if I mistake not, you declared, even on that occasion, that you wished them well, and hoped for their continuance in office. And, I perfectly recollect that in giving your sentiments on Lord Henry Petty's plan of finance, you remarked, that whatever different views might be entertained of the thing itself, you were pleased to think that one good effect would certainly result from it, viz. that it would have a tendency to promote the popularity of the ministry, and thereby enable them to maintain their ground against the intrigues of the *secret cabinet*. I confess, indeed, that any disposition which you might discover to support the late administration, appeared to arise quite as much from a contemptuous opinion entertained of their opponents, as from any peculiar feelings of regard to themselves. For, well do I remember your being accustomed to express yourself concerning the then opposition, both as a party and individually, in the most degrading terms. You laughed them to scorn for their pusillanimous abandonment of the helm of state on the death of their leader. You treated their opposition to the executive government as equally factious and feeble. You ridiculed the editor of the Morning Chronicle for dignifying so contemptible a set of *would-be* statesmen, with the name of "the Opposition." And yet, not long afterwards, you are found hailing with exultation, the triumph obtained by that very junto—the bane of all good government during the present reign—the success of whose intrigues you had just before so strongly deprecated. You are found rejoicing at the exaltation of those very men whom you had lately professed to despise: and expressing gratitude to his majesty for the change in his councils, which you said could not be for the worse, and might be for the better. I am at a loss to conjecture how you can explain away inconsistency so glaring.—In your Register of Jan. 30, you allude to a notice, given by Mr. Sheridan, of a motion on the state of Ireland: whence you conclude that the question of Catholic emancipation, as it is called, is again to be brought forward. Now, Mr. S. expressly stated that he did not intend to include the Catholic question among the objects of his motion. Is it possible that you could have totally overlooked this declaration? If not, why was it passed over without the least notice? Why did you gratuitously assume that Mr. S. and his friends are again about to agitate the Catholic question? Why, if not because it furnished you with an opportunity of bringing a charge against the present opposition, of factious and inconsistent conduct, in proposing a measure when out of office which they abandoned when in place: because it afforded ground for accusing them of baseness in so abandoning, for the sole purpose of keeping their places, a measure which they had judged it necessary to propose. Now, I am by no means convinced that in all cases a member of parliament ought to feel himself absolutely precluded from giving support to a measure merely because particular circumstances may have led him to deem it imprudent to forward that measure when in office. And, as to the blame which the late ministers have incurred in consequence of not having resigned their places rather than consent to arrest the progress of what was called the Catholic Bill, the charge has always appeared to me extremely futile. It cannot surely be contended that it is the duty of ministers to throw up their places in sullen disgust whenever any difference of opinion may arise between themselves and the king. On the contrary, it may be asserted that such a step can but rarely become necessary, and only in extreme cases. Now, it is by no means clear to me that the case in question was one of that description. The measures which the bill was designed to carry into effect were doubtless highly *expedient* and proper, but I do not know that they were of such imperious *necessity*, as to brook no delay, to bend to no circumstances whatever. The late ministers, so far from having been guilty of any dereliction of duty, appear to have judged wisely when they resolved to relinquish their object for a time, till they could introduce it under auspices more favourable for its accomplishment. Abandon the measure! What injustice in such a charge! Were they not particularly careful to have it understood that by giving up the measure then, they did not pledge themselves never to bring it forward again? And was it not in consequence of being thus

steady to their principles, and frank in avowing them, that they lost their places?——In your Register of Jan. 16, you say that you rejoice in the prospect of "the complete annihilation of Whiggism, which has existed for about 140 years to the infinite injury of England." This is so extraordinary a declaration, and so much at variance with some of the doctrines you now profess, that you must allow me to call upon you for an explanation of your meaning. By Whiggism, I believe, is commonly understood those political principles which create a generous attachment to that character of freedom, which is the distinguishing feature of the English constitution. The salutary and genuine operation of these principles on a representative of the people, was well described by one of our senators, when he declared that he considered it to be his duty to keep his ear ever open and attentive to the *voice of the people*, while his eye was steadily fixed, with watchful jealousy, on the *throne*. In order to justify the flippant language above quoted, it will not be sufficient to say that you did not intend to speak lightly of Whig principles, but meant only to express your disapprobation of the conduct of the Whigs, considered as a political party. For, if so, the sentiment ought to have been differently expressed. Whiggism ought not to be brought into disgrace on account of the faults of those who profess it. If the votaries of Whiggism have sometimes erred, has not this arisen from their having lost sight of those pure and genuine principles, which, if faithfully acted upon, would have been the safeguard of their honour, and their protection from reproach? To annihilate Whiggism would be to annihilate the constitution itself. Unless, therefore, you can find out some other definition of the term than what is here given, I do not see how you will be able to defend the expressions alluded to, or how they can be reconciled with the sentiments which you are in the habit of expressing about freedom and reform. You highly value the Bill of Rights, and other constitutional laws, and strongly recommend them as the grand antidote of all political maladies. You consider them as the bulwarks of the constitution. Yet, how were these bulwarks erected if not by Whiggism?——Relying on your candour for the insertion in your Register, of these remarks,—I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,—TREBOR ——

Worcester, Feb. 1808.

ON WAR.

SIR,——In consequence of a very able letter addressed by you to Mr. Roscoe, which appeared in your Register of the 13th instant; I am induced to trouble you with a few observations upon an abstract principle contained in it, concerning which, it seems, you and he are at variance. The principle to which I allude, is—the general question of War: not only as affecting the present contest between England and France; but its influence upon society at large.—It is unnecessary to dilate upon the importance of the question, or to say that it is one of those which have occupied the most serious attention of the first characters in all ages, and in all countries: although, by the way, it is worthy of mention, that, with the exception of Hobbes, who contended that the natural state of man is warfare; most other eminent political writers of this country, have put it down as a state repugnant to the feelings of humanity. To understand the question better, it may not, however, be amiss to divide it into its several parts; to class those parts according to their order, and to discuss them, in as separate a manner, as their nature will admit of. This, I will endeavour to do under the following arrangement. 1st. An inquiry into the tendency of mankind to war:—2d. Whether that tendency is natural, or whether it proceeds from any other cause:—3d. The good or evil resulting from it, or the operation of its effects upon society at large:—and 4th. The advantages or disadvantages of it, when considered relatively with a disposition to peace.——I. Now, Sir, you have, I think, asserted it, as a settled principle, that a tendency to war makes a part of our nature; and, to establish your assertion, have referred us to the propensity which is exhibited in early life to engage in those sports that approximate nearest to it. The foundation of your argument is so vague, that it is not easy to understand it: but, supposing this propensity to exist, is it to be inferred that the practice is indicative of a disposition to annoy?—Is it to be inferred, that, because I learn the art of fencing, my object is to pick quarrels, and to run my adversary through the body? May I not endeavour to acquire this habit, with a view of *self defence* upon some future emergency? And so may, in like manner, this propensity to warlike exercise shew itself in our youth, and I have no doubt is instinctively implanted in us, for the purpose of preparing ourselves to act in defence of our persons. The law of "self preservation" is generally admitted to be the primary law of nature; and it is an injustice to the wisdom of the Creator, to suppose that this early spirit proceeds from motives of acting aggressively to the prejudice of another, rather than defen-

sively in one's own personal protection. That it must proceed from one cause or the other, is, certainly, very clear; but, that it should proceed from the former, is, certainly, very strange. Indeed, I know not how to entertain a thought of it, without impeaching the mercy of the Almighty; there is something so extravagantly preposterous in the idea, that He should make for the sake of unmaking; and that he should form his creatures to-day, and implant in their systems a desire to annihilate one another again to-morrow. I can, however, readily conceive that the disposition may proceed from the latter cause; and, at the same time, be perfectly consistent with His views of mercy, policy, and justice: in favour of this opinion, the law of "self preservation" is countenanced by the sacred Oracles, and forms a part of the code of Moses. "A "man may be forced to kill another, in his "own necessary self defence, and then the "sin is not in the slayer, but in him that is "slain: for, in all cases of force, not he "who is compelled to strike the stroke, but "he, who is the cause of the evil, bears the "whole guilt." The justice of this decree is universally admitted: and in the English law especially; where it may be adduced, and is allowed—as an argument for a breach of the peace, or for the commission of homicide itself! But I know not how it can be well defended, that we should be born with a propensity to injure one another; that this propensity should shew itself before we are even physically able to put it into execution; and that it should not only be sanctioned, but be encouraged by the Creator.—In reply to this, you may, perhaps, say—if there is no disposition to attack; where is the need of these precautions to defend? This question will be better answered under the second head of my arrangement, wherein, I admit the disposition to attack; but conceive that disposition to proceed from, and be strengthened by principles different from those which you have stated. To this head of my arrangement, I shall immediately advert, after noticing an argument that is made use of by you, to prove the intention of the Creator to encourage a spirit of warfare and opposition. You mention, that He seems to have said, at the time of giving different languages to different classes of men, "be "you for ever separate." Now, what he actually did was very much to this effect, as appears in the 11th chapter of Genesis, verses 6, 7 and 8: viz. "And the Lord said, "behold, the people is one, and they have "all one language; and this they begin to "do; and now nothing will be restrained "from them, which they have imagined to "d. Go to, let us go down, and then "confound their language, that they may "not understand one another's speech. So "the Lord scattered them abroad from thence "upon the face of all the earth." Herein, you say, is implied the necessity of war; for, without war, it is, you think, evident that to preserve that separation would, unless the nature of man were previously changed, be quite impossible. It appears, however, that this measure was not thought expedient by the Creator, who, evidently, produced, and believed to be sufficient—the confusion of tongues, for the purpose of disuniting His people, and keeping them in a state of separation. If His intention had been to have acted according to your idea, would He not have said—"Go to, let us go down and in-"stil into their hearts a spirit of contention, "that they may fight, and flee from one "another, and be separate?" But the execution of this plan would but ill have corresponded with that amity and meekness manifested in all His works, and so justly esteemed among the principal attributes of the Deity.——II. That a tendency to war, however, does exist in the minds of some men, cannot, for a moment, be doubted; but then, it does not follow that this tendency, generally speaking (for there may be a very few exceptions) is natural. On the contrary, I cannot conceive any thing more unnatural, than that we should be gifted with a blind propensity mutually to destroy each other, without knowing why or wherefore. If it be not naturally ingrafted in the system then; it must be acquired in the growth: and if it be acquired in the growth, there must be a reason for its acquirement; and that reason such as may be readily discovered. The fact is, Sir, that the actions of most men are regulated by a principle of self interest; and so long as the ultimate object to be obtained is for their own immediate benefit, they are not over nice as to the means which they employ to become possessed of it. The mind is, at first, inclined to startle at this idea, believing it to be repugnant to the principles of morality and justice; but when it is considered that, by an admirable connexion, *virtue* and *public happiness* are so joined together, that it is almost impossible to attain the one, without following the other,—the circumstance no longer seems strange of men acting from motives of self interest; and, yet, in conformity with the principles of virtue. If there are, however, very few who act virtuously, for the sake of being virtuous; who accommodate their conduct to the rules of

equity, from a sheer love of equity; who pursue the paths of morality, from a pure affection for its principle; and who live with justice, piety and chastity, from an absolute conviction of their merits: there are still fewer, who love vice, for the sake of vice; who commit acts of cruelty and injustice, from an intuitive desire to be cruel and unjust; and who delight in deeds of indiscriminate murder, of calm, deliberate destruction, and of ravenous rapine,—from an unaffected fondness for their intrinsic qualifications. Nevertheless, Sir, this would be the case, if, according to your idea, we were endowed with a blind propensity to war: for, then should we be led on to the indulgence of this propensity, without any other care than that of gratifying it; our spirit of contention would prompt us to wreak our passion upon the innocent, as well as the guilty,—between whom, indeed, we should be unable to discriminate; our intellect would be disordered; our reason would lose its sway; and, in short, if "to war, to fight (which is the same thing) were a passion natural to all the creation," as you have stated; "the blood and baseness of our natures would lead us to most preposterous conclusions." But, if this tendency to war be not radically inserted in us, but proceed from some other cause; if it proceed from the cause which I have hinted to be the source of most men's actions; there is no fear of its urging us to such extravagant bounds, because the argument, which I made use of before, concerning the connexion of virtue and public happiness, applies also, in great measure, to the present case. This, I shall endeavour to shew under the third head of my arrangement, treating of the operation of the effects of this tendency upon society at large: but, before quitting this head, I am desirous of explaining myself more fully, for differing from you in opinion, that the tendency of mankind to war does not proceed from blind inherent qualities, but from those motives which are the pivot, upon which, our conduct generally turns.—If some ultimate benefit is held out by engaging in a war; if an opportunity offers of bettering our fortune; if a soldier expects to be made a corporal, by fighting well; or a corporal, a serjeant; or any other officer looks to promotion for his exertions; the mystery is immediately developed, and we are no longer at a loss to discover, why it is that the love of fighting predominates. It is not the *medium*, but the *object* that is beloved; and if the object can only be acquired through the assistance of the medium; no wonder that the medium is esteemed: but then it is not esteemed for itself, but for the object it is capable of acquiring. He must, indeed, be very fond of fighting, who exposes himself to the danger of receiving a hard knock from his enemy, for the sake only of obtaining an opportunity to give him a harder. The noble mind of Don Quixotte de la Mancha might, to be sure, have cherished such ideas; but, since his time, it would be difficult, I think, to point out another, who was so great an amateur of the profession. But, to be serious. Those, bred up to arms, do not love war for the sake of war; but, like the rest of mankind in other respects, love it from motives of self interest, or from motives, which approximate very near to it: some, more distinguished than others, love it for those virtues you have particularized: viz. patriotism, loyalty, and fidelity. Some, for reasons less noble, but equally unsubstantial: viz. honour, rank, and reputation; and others, for what the generality of mankind are grasping after: viz. wealth, power, and dominion. This position may be denied; nay, it may be denied by persons believing it to be untrue, because it is frequently dressed up in false colours and disguised so, that, upon a cursory view, it is imperceptible by the understanding: but, nevertheless, the truth of it is confirmed by actual observation, so as to render unnecessary the use of farther argument. If it were not so, Mr. Cobbett, how happens it, that the French army has attained its present pitch of discipline and order? If it were not, Sir, that each soldier looks forward to promotion, and fights for the approbation of his general; for the maintenance of his character; and, more especially, for the plunder he expects to enjoy. Do not the same causes influence our sailors; who, brave, hardy, and perfect as they are, contemplate the amount of "prize money," they are in hopes of obtaining, among the foremost advantages of their profession. Give them the option of fighting an enemy's man of war, or a Spanish galleon laden with bullion, gold dust, and dollars, and see whether their love of fighting will induce them to attack the first, which, from its equipment and constitution, will lend them a harder tug; or, the latter, where, in all probability, they will meet with little or no opposition. Not only is this peculiar, Sir, to the French army, and to our navy,—but so is it with all the world: so is it with our soldiers; or else, where would be the need of "bounty," which is held out to them as a lure to enlist in the service. What, will any one attempt to make me believe, that there is something so captivating in the

name of war; something so irresistible in this natural tendency that you talk of, that, when a recruiting serjeant claps a country booby on the back, and asks him to fight for his "king and country;" his arguments would be equally effective in prevailing upon him, without the use of money? Common sense tells us, not; and common observation proves it, not. This pure spirit of warfare neither exists, nor is it reasonable that it should exist: a man who goes into the field with no other view than the actual pleasure he expects to derive from the physical operation of killing his adversary, is an inconceivable monster; but if he has an object to attain, and, although acting repugnantly to his feelings, yet believes his mode of action to be just and necessary, the case is totally different.—Having already made this letter longer than, I fear, you will find convenient to insert in your Register; I must defer the consideration of the two remaining topics, for the present.——I am, Sir, yours, &c.—W. S. L.—*Feb.* 15, 1808.

TYTHES.

SIR,——Among the various merits of your excellent Register, I have received great pleasure in observing the liberal admission of letters from your correspondents, who have occasionally differed from you on subjects of controversy, even when their authors have not been deficient in powers of argument, which are peculiarly your forte: therefore, there is less reason to doubt, that you will admit my reply to some extraordinary assertions of a gentleman, who, under the signature of Vindex, has lately engaged in an attack, on the Irish petitioners for a commutation of tythes.—In consequence of the very great attention I have for years, paid to the various publications on this subject, I am persuaded, that the ability of one party in defending them, and the conviction of the other in condemning them, will never be productive of any thing but wrangling; and unless the legislature decidedly interferes in behalf of the rights of society, in opposition to the tythe system; the iniquity and tyranny of *tythe gathering* will continue to disgrace the law and constitution of England.—Vindex condescends to allow the tythe to be *one* great grievance under which the Irish nation at present labours; and then artfully pretends it is but a small part of them; hoping by this expedient of blending the tythes with other matter, to draw off the attention of your readers from that main grievance, so far as to discourage them from any wish to reform it; but he ought to distinguish between a grievance established by law; and those which grow out of the corruption of the times; and the rapacity of individuals. For the whole of the various oppressions to which Vindex imputes the discontents of Ireland, he states as arising "from the exactions of Catholic priests; from those of tythes levied by the Protestant clergy; and the rents demanded by the land proprietors and middlemen." Surely, then, he ought to have marked *tythe gathering*, which more particularly requires the reform of parliament, as more necessary for its interference than those other abuses, which the petitioners themselves might remedy, by the resolutions of county meetings, and inculcating a more liberal conduct in their own priests. The impropriate tythes are the indisputable property of the laity, yet it is so little founded in reason and justice, and so obviously disgraceful to a free constitution, that parliament has as much right to commute it by an honourable equivalent, for the benefit of the community, as to carry a public road through private property, on the same principle. Nothing but wilful misrepresentation, or professional prejudice, can attempt to support an argument, that clerical tythes are as much a parson's property, as the landed estate is the property of his patron: what a shameful claim it is to call that *property* which is no more than a *legal privilege of plundering* our neighbour's fields. The more respectable the profession of a clergyman, the more it behoves them to obtain the abolition of such a privilege; and of "reaping where they have not sown," under the sanction of a *tythe bough*, which disgracefully proclaims to all travellers, *in this parish lives a tythe* GATHERER. The appellation of tythe OWNER must be borne with, till the legislature assigns a provision for the clergy less incongruous to their religious and moral principles. The clergy should make a point to distinguish the present *unavoidable* situation of tythe *owner*, from the *wilful* character of gathering them *in kind*, which might be easily done by resuming their ancient distinction of a rose in the hat, which a *tythe gatherer* would not venture to wear, when it would be a proof of his wishing to avoid an imputation he is ashamed of.—Vindex, who must be either a tythe *gatherer*, or employed as their advocate, observes "that it would be superfluous to enter into any proof of the common law right of tythes." True, that is the very evil complained of, that the common law should protect a claim so inconsistent with the liberties of England; a claim founded on the impostures of popery; established by one monarch as an atonement for murder; and confirmed by another, to le-

nalize his own seizure of the property of the convents; by dividing it among his courtiers.—Vindex does not hesitate to say "that he doubts, whether any land proprietor in the empire, can produce *so venerable* a title to his estate!!!" Admitting, that all our titles originated with William the Conqueror, subject to tythes previously established, landed estates are hereditary; did he make church livings so? What parson can say he was born to such a rectory, or can claim it before the patron thinks proper to present him? Who are their patrons? Are they not the owners of the land, of the *produce of which only*, the parson can claim a tythe? And are not the clergy, servants of government appointed in aid of the laws, to prevent the inflictions of penalties by preaching religion and morality? Was government to adopt, and protect another national religion, for example the Presbyterian, which disclaims the right of tythes; what would become of it, if it was not transferred by law to the new ministers? And to whom would that property naturally devolve, but to the owners of the nine parts? In such case lay impropriations would be an exception, but the iniquity of the tenure would soon be commuted, either by church lands, or bought out by occupiers subject to it. So much for arguments about *property*, which are much too often pleaded by the clergy.——Vindex says "the Irish petitioners could have no right to what was not, and could not be conveyed by William from the original grantees." *Therefore*, they petition, and on the most reasonable ground, that they may *recover a right* to the produce of their own labour and talents, growing on their own estates, which is at present subject either to plunder or litigation. The quibble produced by Vindex, that it would be unjust to the clergy as well as to those who either sold or let land, subject to tythe which diminished the value of it, that the difference "should go to the present proprietors and occupiers for which no consideration had been paid." It may be asked, what would they get but a property they were originally entitled to, and the satisfaction of being exonerated from an odious yoke from which almost all Europe is relieved, by the conviction that it originated from the priestcraft of Popery. But, Vindex says, "his arguments will apply equally, both to abolition and commutation, unless commutation be adequate to the clergy, and still levied off the soil." He might with equal justice revive their original claim, which included all professions, trades, and merchandize, *as well as the produce of the soil.* In one of your former Registers, Mr. Cobbett, you stated that annual produce at one hundred and twenty millions, therefore, only set the rights of the clergy in the aggregate at double their claims on agriculture, their revenues would amount to twenty four millions annually, which compared with *the quantum meruit of curacies* at fifty pounds per annum in ten thousand parishes, would give only five hundred thousand, and leave a species of *sinecure* of upwards of twenty-three millions in consideration of *the same duty* performed by curates! Undoubtedly lay tythes must be deducted from this calculation, still it is enormous and unmerited, and such an advocate as Vindex, had better drop the subject, who, with all his abilities has the modesty to call an attempt at an honourable commutation, "PLUNDER," when that term may be applied with so much more justice, to tythe gathering.—A LANDHOLDER.—*Feb.* 10, 1808.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

Report of the Minister of War on the Measures taken by France under the present circumstances.—6th Jan.

(Concluded from p. 384.*)*

The necessity of shutting the ports of the continent against our irreconcileable enemy, and of having upon every point of attack considerable means, in order to profit by any fortunate circumstances which might present themselves, to carry the war to the heart of England, Ireland, and the Indies, may render the levy of the conscription of 1809 necessary.—The party which rules at London has proclaimed the principle of eternal war, and the expedition to Copenhagen has revealed its criminal intentions. Though the indignation of all Europe has been excited against England—though at no period France had such numerous armies, it is not sufficient—it is necessary that English influence should be attacked every where it exists, till the moment in which the sight of so many dangers shall induce England to drive from her counsels the Olygarchs who direct them, and to confide the administration to wise men, capable of conciliating the love and interest of the country with the love and interest of the human race.—A vulgar policy would have made your Majesty disarm; but such a policy would be a scourge to France, and render imperfect the great results you have prepared.—Yes, Sire, your Majesty, far from diminishing your arms, ought to augment them, till England shall have acknowledged the independence of all powers, and restored to the seas that tranquillity which your Majesty has ensured to the continent. Un-

doubtedly your Majesty must suffer in requiring from your people fresh sacrifices, and in imposing new obligations on them—but you ought also to yield to the cry of all the French.—" No repose till the sea be free, " and a just peace shall have re-established " France in the most just, the most useful, " and the most necessary of her rights."

IRELAND.

Declaration of the Protestants of Newry, lately convened by requisition—the Seneschal in the Chair.

We the Protestant inhabitants of Newry, actuated by a warm wish for the tranquillity and happiness of our country, feel ourselves impelled, at this awful and momentous crisis of human affairs, to declare, in the most open and unreserved manner, our sentiments, opinions, and wishes on a question on which the most important interests of Ireland, and of the empire, are deeply involved, viz. the claims of our countrymen, who profess the Roman Catholic faith, to an equal admissibility to the offices and dignities of the state with their Protestant fellow subjects. We aver that towards our fellow citizens of that persuasion we are actuated by sentiments of sincere good will and unequivocal kindness: that we do not consider diversity of religious belief as any ground of civil incapacity or political disqualification; and that we shall rejoice to see them restored to every privilege and capability which the other subjects of this great and free empire enjoy.—We lament exceedingly the obstacles which have hitherto impeded the accomplishment of that desirable object, and indulge the hope of seeing them removed. We are decisively of opinion, that the chief difficulty is founded on the appointment of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of this country, who derive their dignity and rank in the church from the favour of a foreign potentate, now unhappily subjected to the dictation and tyranny of our implacable enemy. We trust we shall be excused for stating that such a patronage was unknown for nearly eight hundred years subsequent to the establishment of Christianity in this kingdom, and that it is now unknown in Catholic countries. —It is to us matter of the most sincere gratification to reflect that this view of the subject has lately been urged and insisted on by many of the wisest, the ablest and most zealous members of the Catholic body. We therefore look with respect and with confidence to the wisdom, the good sense, and the patriotism of the respectable nobleman and gentleman who preside over the Catholic councils to this country, and from the source we presume to hope for such an arrangement as may tend to obviate this anomaly.—Under such an arrangement we entertain the most confident hope and belief that the paternal goodness of our most gracious sovereign, co-operating with the enlightened wisdom and liberal policy of the imperial parliament, would not hesitate to restore our Catholic countrymen to a perfect parity with ourselves: and we should farther hope that such an arrangement would be rendered more complete and satisfactory by such a national provision for the Catholic clergy as would admit of adequate rewards to men of liberal education and respectable attainments; rewards which the present condition of the Catholic church in this country does by no means afford.—From such an adjustment we would anticipate consequences the most beneficial and important, an efficient addition to the energies of the state, an increased facility of military exertion, an extension of mutual benevolence.——We feel that it is expedient to guard ourselves against a possible imputation, namely, that we have taken up this subject with party views, or with an intention to promote the interest of any particular set of politicians or statesmen. ——We solemnly declare that we are influenced solely by views of public happiness and public advantage. God forbid that we should be instrumental in provoking discussions, or exciting a spirit, that might have a tendency to embarrass his majesty's councils. To whatever description of persons his majesty, in his wisdom and goodness, may confide the direction of the national strength; we sincerely wish them success; and we devoutly implore the favour and blessing of Divine Providence on their exertion to protect this empire against the machinations of an incensed and most formidable foe.

ENGLAND.——*On the 9th of Feb.* 1808, *the Capture of the Danish West India Islands was announced in the London Gazette.—The following are the Articles of Capitulation.*

Articles of Capitulation for the Surrender of the Danish Islands of St. Thomas and St. John's, together with their Dependencies, entered into between General Henry Bowyer, the Commander of the land forces, and Rear Admiral the Honourable

(To be continued.)

Printed by Cox and Baylis, No. 75, Great Queen Street, and published by R. Bagshaw, Brydges Street, Covent Garden, where former Numbers may be had; sold also by J. Budd, Crown and Mitre, Pall-Mall.